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Sexual exploitation and abuse: implementing a zero-tolerance policy

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered an advance version of the report of the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1). During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 2 March 2018.

2. It is indicated in the report of the Secretary-General that additional information on allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse which relate to personnel in peacekeeping and special political missions, other United Nations entities and non-United Nations international forces authorized by a Security Council mandate (covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2017) is available from https://delegate.un.int/dgacm/delegate.nsf/xaOpenPortal.xsp (ibid., summary) (see also para. 19). The Advisory Committee was informed that the information online contained a series of comparative tables, similar to those presented in previous reports of the Secretary-General on this subject, along with updates to allegations recorded prior to the current reporting period, dating back to 2010.

II. Background

3. The Advisory Committee recalls that, following allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in the Central African Republic that came to light in 2014, the Secretary-General, in June 2015, appointed an external independent review panel to

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review and assess the response of the United Nations to allegations of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse by international peacekeeping forces in the Central African Republic. The report of the External Independent Review Panel was submitted to the General Assembly in June 2016 (see A/71/99). In this connection, the General Assembly adopted resolutions 69/307, 70/286 and 71/278, and the Security Council adopted resolution 2272 (2016).[1] Furthermore, the Assembly adopted resolution 71/297 after considering the Secretary-General's four-part strategy[2] set out in his report entitled "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach" (A/71/818, A/71/818/Corr.1 and A/71/818/Add.1).

4. The most recent report of the Secretary-General (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1) is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 71/278 and 71/297. In its resolution 71/278, the Assembly decided, inter alia, to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session an item entitled "Sexual exploitation and abuse: implementing a zero-tolerance policy" and requested the Secretary-General to continue to report, pursuant to resolution 57/306, on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, including on progress made in implementing a zero-tolerance policy within the United Nations system, in line with existing mandates and procedures. In its resolution 71/297, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on several related issues in his next report (see paras. 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15 and 23 of the resolution). These included the results achieved and challenges encountered in the implementation of the United Nations policy of zero tolerance, increasing cooperation within the United Nations system and addressing identified gaps in screening and investigative capacity; a holistic analysis of United Nations inter-agency cooperation at the country level; and recommendations on comprehensively mitigating risk factors. Upon request, the Advisory Committee received a table identifying those paragraphs in the report of the Secretary-General which respond to the requests of the Assembly in that resolution (see annex).

III. Implementation progress

5. The report of the Secretary-General (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1) provides information on the following: an overview of the system-wide response — realizing a cultural change (sect. II); implementation of the zero-tolerance policy (sect. III); implementation of the Secretary-General's new approach strategy (sect. IV); and an overview of data on allegations (sect. V).

6. The Secretary-General indicates that, since the submission of his new strategy, various efforts have been made in partnership with Member States and other stakeholders in addressing issues related to sexual exploitation and abuse; however, incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse continue (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, para. 1). The Secretary-General reports that a total of 34 entities of the system have developed plans that include measures for risk mitigation, community engagement and the reporting of complaints, as well as for outreach to, and the protection of, victims, witnesses and family members (ibid., para. 11).

7. The Secretary-General also indicates that, effective January 2018, senior managers system-wide are required to submit annual certifications to their respective governing bodies that all credible allegations related to United Nations staff and

[1] A summary of the background and relevant provisions of these resolutions is provided in section II of the Advisory Committee's previous report on this matter (A/71/867).

[2] The strategy focuses on four areas of action: putting victims first; ending impunity; engaging civil society and external partners; and improving strategic communications for education and transparency.

affiliated personnel have been fully and accurately reported (ibid., para. 13). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the "senior managers system-wide" referred to in the paragraph include those of the funds and programmes, but not those of the specialized agencies, since the latter are autonomous organizations that coordinate with the United Nations and each other through the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). Therefore, the specialized agencies are not, at this time, reporting to the Secretary-General on matters concerning sexual exploitation and abuse. **The Advisory Committee notes that the report of the Secretary-General does not yet reflect a truly system-wide approach across all United Nations entities to addressing the matter of sexual exploitation and abuse and trusts that additional efforts will be made through CEB to ensure consistency and coherence in this regard (see also paras. 11–13 and 28–30 below).**

8. It is indicated in the report of the Secretary-General that all staff members will be required to sign a written attestation of commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, including their compliance with rules prohibiting sexual exploitation and abuse and requiring the reporting of allegations. Moreover, an e-learning training programme was made mandatory for all Secretariat personnel in May 2017 and has been completed by over 14,000 personnel to date (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, paras. 14 and 24). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the e-learning course was offered in two versions (a general version and a version for managers and commanders) currently available in English on three platforms (the Secretariat's Inspira platform, the Learning Management System of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the external website of the United Nations System Staff College) and that a consolidation into one platform (most likely Inspira) is under development. Furthermore, a French version is undergoing technical testing and will be available before May 2018.

Screening, reporting and investigative capacity

9. The General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to outline specific measures for increasing cooperation within the United Nations system, including between the Secretariat and its separately administered funds and programmes, to address identified gaps in screening and investigative capacity and in the case management and reporting of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (resolution 71/297, para. 10).

10. With respect to screening, the Secretary-General indicates that an electronic tool for screening for United Nations personnel dismissed as a result of substantiated allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, or who resigned during an investigation, is expected to become operational in 2018. The goal of the tool is to prevent such individuals from being re-employed within the United Nations system, and it will be used across the Secretariat and its separately administered agencies, funds and programmes. In addition, the Secretary-General indicates that, owing to limited capacity, the Secretariat is generally able to conduct human rights screening only for candidates being considered for senior positions (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, paras. 22–23).

11. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Organization did not have a system-wide screening mechanism for identifying potential candidates with a history of sexual exploitation and abuse. A screening tool, the "sexual exploitation and abuse tracker", was developed in 2017 by the Office of Information

and Communications Technology in collaboration with those offices involved[3] and is to be implemented in the second quarter of 2018. Related guidelines have been established with the clearance of the Office of Legal Affairs and approval of the High-level Steering Group on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (see also A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, para. 10). The Committee was informed that the system would create and maintain a centralized database accessible across the Organization, containing records of: (a) individuals found to have engaged in sexual exploitation and abuse; and (b) former staff members who were the subject of a pending investigation and/or disciplinary process for sexual exploitation and abuse and initiated their separation from service before the completion of the investigation or disciplinary process. In addition, the Committee was informed that the Office of Human Resources Management had included a special note in all job openings and hiring letters and would also include a screening question in the personal history profile form for applicants to United Nations vacancies in the second quarter of 2018. **The Committee has noted the lack of a common platform and established mechanisms for ensuring that all databases and offices share the same information in a timely manner (see A/71/643, para. 17). The Committee looks forward to the establishment of the new screening system.**

12. Information on reporting, data collection and investigation is provided in paragraphs 37 to 47 of the report of the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General indicates that the alignment between data collection and reporting methods system-wide is of fundamental importance. A common standard and method must be developed and applied across all entities so that allegations are reported in the same way and the data are easily consolidated and accessible. The Secretary-General has requested that all relevant entities finalize this ongoing work by the end of 2018 (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, para. 70). **The Advisory Committee recalls its concern over the currently fragmented nature of reporting and data collection and expects that more information on the alignment between data collection and reporting methods system-wide will be provided in the next report of the Secretary-General (see A/71/643, para. 18).**

13. The Secretary-General further indicates that he has requested United Nations system entities to strengthen their investigative methods and processes, including by pooling investigative capacities (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, para. 44). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Investigations Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and those of six of the separately administered funds and programmes (the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office for Project Services and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) fell under the aegis of the Secretary-General. Recognizing that there may be a need to draw upon each other's support at times of high demand, in situations not necessarily limited to sexual exploitation and abuse, the investigation offices have agreed to provide mutual assistance to one another when needed, when appropriate and where possible. So far, this has been limited to UNICEF providing assistance to OIOS during the spike in sexual exploitation and abuse investigations in the Central African Republic in 2016 and to OIOS supporting UNFPA with digital forensic investigations and hosting a series of training programmes. The Committee was also informed, upon enquiry, that

[3] The Conduct and Discipline Unit of the Department of Field Support, the Office of the Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, the Office of Human Resources Management, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

there were no cost implications involved in such mutual assistance. **The Committee notes the efforts of the Secretary-General in this regard.**

Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

14. With respect to the Trust Fund in Support of Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, established in 2016, the Secretary-General indicates that the Fund provides resources to support a range of victims' assistance services and projects. An internal review committee on the Trust Fund, comprising senior representatives of entities across the system, has approved projects in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, para. 31). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 19 March 2018, the Trust Fund held $317,700 in payments withheld in connection with substantiated allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (consisting of any payments with respect to the implicated members of uniformed components in peacekeeping missions, including daily allowance, recreational leave allowance and/or any exceptional premium for risk which may have accrued to the individuals). The amount stems from 26 substantiated allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving a total of 33 military personnel and 3 substantiated allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving 9 police personnel.

15. Concerning the withholding of payments, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as indicated by the Secretary-General in his previous reports: (a) payments were being suspended (and withheld if an investigation substantiated the allegations) from the time the troop- or police-contributing country was notified of an incident until the completion of the individual's participation in an investigation, whether at the conclusion of an investigation or the earlier departure of the implicated individual from the mission (see A/69/779, para. 64); and (b) where an allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse was substantiated, payments related to implicated individuals that had been suspended or were otherwise outstanding would not be paid from the date of the incident, and any payments already made would be charged against future payments to the Member State (see A/70/729, para. 62).

Other initiatives of the Secretary-General

16. The Secretary-General indicates that the high-level meeting convened in September 2017 provided an opportunity for Heads of State and Government, heads of international and regional organizations, civil society partners and the leadership of the United Nations to signal their solidarity and commitment to eradicate this scourge. At that meeting, the Secretary-General presented two arrangements on preventing and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse: (a) the voluntary compact, of which 86 Member States are currently signatories; and (b) the circle of leadership, established as a means for Heads of State and Government to demonstrate their collective resolve at the highest political level, which 58 leaders have joined. The Secretary-General proposes that a meeting of the circle of leadership be convened on the margins of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly in order to take stock of progress and chart a course for the future. The Secretary-General also encourages other Member States to consider signing the voluntary compact and intends to work with Member States on a robust programme of engagement on the many initiatives under way across the system (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, paras. 52–53).

Overview of data on allegations

17. A total of 138 allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse were reported for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2017, compared with 166 allegations reported in 2016 (ibid., paras. 61–68). A detailed breakdown is provided in the additional

information online (see para. 2), including the nature of allegations, status of investigation and reporting of the allegations by entities. The breakdown of the 138 allegations is as follows:

(a) A total of 62 allegations against civilian, military, police personnel in 10 peacekeeping and special political missions, which were reported to OIOS;

(b) A total of 75 allegations against personnel of other United Nations entities and their implementing partners, which were reported to the Office of Human Resources Management;

(c) One allegation against non-United Nations forces authorized by a Security Council mandate, which was reported to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (see para. 22).

18. Comparative information from 2016 was provided to the Advisory Committee upon request (see table 1). The Committee was also informed that, of the allegations reported in 2017, 38 per cent related to allegations that occurred in 2017, 38 per cent from previous years, as far back as 2003, and 24 per cent for which this information is currently unknown (see table 2).

Table 1
Allegations reported in 2016 and 2017

Entity	*2016*	*2017*	*Percentage increase (decrease)*
Peacekeeping operations and special political missions	104	62	(40.4)
United Nations entities other than peacekeeping operations and special political missions	42	75	78.6
Non-United Nations forces	20	1	(95.0)
Total	**166**	**138**	**(16.9)**

Table 2
Allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, by year of occurrence

(Percentage)

Entity	*2016 and prior years*	*2017*	*Unknown*
Peacekeeping operations and special political missions	47	53	–
United Nations entities other than peacekeeping operations and special political missions	29	24	47
Non-United Nations forces	–	100	–
System-wide	**38**	**38**	**24**

19. The Secretary-General indicates that, as an additional means of holding United Nations senior leadership accountable, the Office of the Special Coordinator provides him with a consolidated update on a quarterly basis of allegations received system-wide. Since November 2017, he has made such updates publicly available. The Department of Field Support continues to report and update data on allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse on its Conduct and Discipline website (https://conduct.unmissions.org/) (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, para. 37). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as from November 2017, the Spokesperson of the Secretary-General publicly discloses the number of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse received system-wide each quarter. The information

will also be made available on the website "Preventing sexual exploitation and abuse" (https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/).

20. **The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly has reaffirmed the collective and unanimous position that one substantiated case of sexual exploitation and abuse is one case too many (resolution 71/297, para. 4). The Committee is of the view that more focus should be given to analysing the nature of the allegations, in particular those egregious cases, rather than the number of allegations only.**

Non-United Nations forces

21. Concerning non-United Nations forces, the Secretary-General indicates that, unless specifically mandated by the Security Council, challenges will remain as regards the consistent application of measures and cooperation with the United Nations. He urges that further options be explored for ensuring enforcement, including through the endorsement of a special protocol outlining minimum standards for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse by non-United Nations forces authorized under a Security Council mandate (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, para. 50). Upon clarification, the Advisory Committee was informed that the endorsement by Member States of a protocol outlining minimum standards for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse applicable to non-United Nations forces would be a step forward in harmonizing and strengthening such measures.

22. As for the role of OHCHR in relation to reporting on allegations against non-United Nations forces (see para. 17 (c)), the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that OHCHR was the lead entity within the United Nations system for investigating, reporting and following up on allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by non-United Nations forces and that it was mandated to report such allegations in the annual report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/286. The number of non-United Nations forces deployed is currently estimated at over 30,000 troops, although providing an accurate number is challenging. The Committee was further informed that the extent to which OHCHR may gather information pertaining to such allegations depends on a range of factors, such as the deployment of an OHCHR field presence or a human rights component of a peacekeeping operation, access to victims, sites and other sources of information, capacity to systematically undertake monitoring and reporting and the security situation.

IV. The Offices of the Special Coordinator and of the Victims' Rights Advocate

23. The Advisory Committee recalls that the Secretary-General has appointed two senior officials to work in the area of prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, as follows:

(a) In March 2016, the Special Coordinator on Improving the United Nations Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (at the Under-Secretary-General level), with a time-bound mandate to organize, unify and prioritize the United Nations system-wide measures for prevention and response, funded under extrabudgetary resources (A/71/97, para. 11). The position was initially established on 1 March 2016 for a period of 11 months and subsequently extended for 12 months until 31 January 2018 and 11 months until 31 December 2018, respectively, following the concurrence of the Advisory Committee (see paras. 24–27);

(b) In August 2017, the first Victims' Rights Advocate (at the Assistant Secretary-General level), to strengthen the support that the United Nations gives to victims and ensure that a victim-centred approach is integrated into prevention and response, including access to justice (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, para. 26). The General Assembly approved the resources for the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate for 2018 under the programme budget for 2018–2019, including the establishment of four positions (1 Assistant Secretary-General, 1 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 General Service (Other level))[4] (resolution 72/262, sect. X).

24. The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly approved the related resource requirements for 2018 only, based on the Committee's recommendation, in view of the very limited information made available with respect to the staffing requirements for the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate and the Committee's concerns over the proposed reporting lines and structures (see A/72/7/Add.27, para. 16). In this connection, the concurrence of the Committee with the extension of the position of the Special Coordinator from 1 February to 31 December 2018 was provided on the understanding that the above-mentioned issues would be addressed in the next report of the Secretary-General on the revised estimates for the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate, for the consideration of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session.

25. During its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1), the Advisory Committee again sought clarification as to the functions, cost-sharing arrangements, structures and reporting lines of the Offices of the Special Coordinator and of the Victims' Rights Advocate. The Committee was informed, inter alia, that:

(a) The Special Coordinator had no operational responsibility but had the delegated authority of the Secretary-General to take decisions to prevent overlap, duplication and fragmentation of approach across the system. The role of the Victims' Rights Advocate is policy-oriented, aimed at improving victims' access to assistance and support services, including access to justice. While their roles are interlinked, the work of the Victims' Rights Advocate feeds into and contributes to the functions of the Special Coordinator and the Secretary-General's broad strategy. The Victims' Rights Advocate reports to the Special Coordinator, and their offices are co-located;

(b) In the Office of the Special Coordinator, in addition to the posts funded by extrabudgetary resources, there has indeed been "cost sharing" in the form of loaned resources. For example, the Department of Political Affairs loaned a P-3 post from March 2016 to March 2018, and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) loaned administrative support in the form of two administrative positions from May 2016 to February 2018 and from March 2016 to November 2017, respectively. In addition, travel for the Special Coordinator is paid for by the entity requesting her visit;

(c) With respect to initiatives undertaken under the umbrella of the Special Coordinator, there is "informal cost sharing" in that personnel of all entities represented in the working group on sexual exploitation and abuse (see A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, para. 10) attend regular meetings and consistently engage in the development and implementation of initiatives. For example, UNICEF and UNFPA are taking the lead in developing the protocol on preventing and addressing allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving implementing partners. UNICEF and the Conduct and Discipline Unit of the Department of Field Support

[4] Funding for the Office for 2017 was provided by the Secretary-General under the limited budgetary discretionary authority mechanism (see A/72/497, paras. 20–21).

have taken the lead in the development and piloting of the protocol on victims' assistance. OIOS has taken the lead in the development of training materials on the incident reporting form. OHCHR is the lead entity with regard to work streams related to non-United Nations forces operating under a Security Council mandate (see also para. 22).

26. The Advisory Committee has questioned the appropriateness of the structures and apparent change of reporting lines for the Advocate (from reporting directly to the Secretary-General to reporting through the Special Coordinator) (see A/71/818 and A/71/818/Corr.1, para. 27, and A/72/373, para. 8). The Committee has also noted with concern the unorthodox arrangement whereby the Advocate, a senior-level post funded through regular budget resources, reports to the Special Coordinator, a temporary senior-level position funded through extrabudgetary resources (see A/72/7/Add.27, paras. 8–14, and A/71/867, para. 21). The Committee recalls that it was informed during its recent consideration of the request for the extension of the position of the Special Coordinator that the Special Coordinator had transitioned from serving on a full-time basis to a "when actually employed" contractual arrangement in May 2017 and that this would continue throughout 2018.

27. **The Advisory Committee recalls its recommendation that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his future proposals on the Office of the Special Coordinator and the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate, to indicate an optimal structure for the treatment of all matters relating to sexual exploitation and abuse and victims' rights, which should contain updated information on cost-sharing arrangements and the ongoing staffing and funding requirements, for consideration at its seventy-third session (A/72/7/Add.27, para. 14). The Committee considers that the existing reporting structures should be assessed at that time and any related adjustments should be included in the proposal (see also para. 24 above).**

28. The Advisory Committee further recalls that, in its consideration of reports and communications on the subject of prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse in recent years, it has repeatedly requested but has not received an update on the system-wide resources dedicated to the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse (A/71/867, para. 21, and A/72/7/Add.27, para. 14). In the context of its recent consideration of the request for the extension of the position of the Special Coordinator, the Committee again requested this information and was informed that, in addition to the four extrabudgetary-funded positions in the Office of the Special Coordinator, the four positions in the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate and the four Field Victims' Rights Advocate positions (see paras. 31–33), there are 14 support account posts in the Conduct and Discipline Unit at Headquarters, 100 mission posts in Conduct and Discipline Teams and a number of other officers in the United Nations system supporting initiatives related to the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse. During its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1), the Committee again requested information on the financial resources allocated to sexual exploitation and abuse at the Secretariat and system-wide and was informed that additional information on the financial resources was not available.

29. **The Advisory Committee notes that the information provided to the Committee is incomplete and does not incorporate all existing human and financial resources dedicated to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse in the Secretariat and across the United Nations system. The Committee again cautions against the potential risk of fragmentation in the different work streams relating to the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse in the field and at Headquarters and encourages close coordination between field-based and Headquarters staff on these matters (A/72/7/Add.27, para. 23).**

30. **The Advisory Committee reiterates its previous recommendations, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolutions 71/297 and 72/262, that any proposal that the Secretary-General may submit on the Office of the Special Coordinator and the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate should include details on the proposed structures and rationale for their placement within the Organization, as well as full justification for any proposed resources dedicated to sexual exploitation and abuse issues across the Secretariat and other relevant United Nations systems entities (see A/71/867, para. 21, and A/72/7/Add.27, para. 14).**

Four temporary positions for Field Victims' Rights Advocates

31. A related issue is the potential establishment of four temporary positions of Field Victims' Rights Advocate at peacekeeping operations. The Advisory Committee recalls that the Secretary-General proposed to establish four temporary positions at the P-5 level for each of four missions[5] for the financial period 2017/18, with estimated requirements of $1,180,000, which would be absorbed within the approved budgets of the missions concerned for the period (A/71/818/Add.1, para. 5). The Committee emphasized at the time that proposals for the establishment of posts and positions under regular and peacekeeping budgets must be submitted for approval by the General Assembly in the context of the relevant budget submissions (A/71/867, para. 18).

32. It is indicated in the report of the Secretary-General that he instructed his Special Representatives to designate the Field Victims' Rights Advocates at the mid-to-senior level in the four peacekeeping operations and that the Advocates assumed this role in addition to their existing functions, with a dual reporting line to the relevant Special Representative and the Victims' Rights Advocate (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1, para. 26). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Field Victims' Rights Advocates were designated in September 2017 from among existing personnel in the respective peacekeeping missions with the requisite experience and expertise to undertake these functions, in addition to their other responsibilities, as follows: (a) MINUSCA: Chief, Child Protection Section/Human Rights Division (P-5); (b) MINUJUSTH: Chief, Human Rights Service/Representative of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (D-1); (c) MONUSCO: Chief, Civil Affairs (D-1); and (d) UNMISS: Director, Mission Support (D-2). The Secretary-General indicates that the work of the Field Victims' Rights Advocates has already had a positive impact (ibid., para. 29). The Advisory Committee notes that the report of the Secretary-General does not provide any information with respect to the caseload of the four Field Victims' Rights Advocates since their designation in September 2017.

33. The Advisory Committee was further informed, upon enquiry, that proposals for the establishment of four dedicated specialized posts of Victims' Rights Advocate (at the P-5 level) have been included in the 2018/19 proposed budgets for the relevant missions (MINUSCA, MINUJUSTH, MONUSCO and UNMISS) for consideration by the General Assembly during the second part of its resumed seventy-second session. However, the Committee notes from the budget proposals for 2018/19 that a total of three posts (2 posts of Field Victims' Rights Advocate and 1 post of Senior

[5] MINUSCA, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)/United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) and United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

Human Rights Officer) [6] are requested for MINUSCA, [7] MONUSCO [8] and MINUJUSTH, while no such request is included in the proposed budget for UNMISS. **The Advisory Committee will revert to the matter of the temporary positions of Field Victims' Rights Advocate in the context of its consideration of the proposed budgets for 2018/19 for MINUSCA, MONUSCO, MINUJUSTH and UNMISS.**

V. Conclusion

34. Section VI of the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1) is entitled "Conclusions and recommendations". Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the report of the Secretary-General was a progress report and therefore did not contain any specific proposals for actions to be taken by the General Assembly. **Subject to its comments and recommendations above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly take note of the report of the Secretary-General.**

[6] MINUJUSTH is requesting one post of Senior Human Rights Officer (P-5), who will also undertake the role of the Field Victims' Rights Advocate (A/72/560, para. 92).

[7] See A/72/779, table 2 and para. 49.

[8] See A/72/784, para. 47.

Annex

Status of implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/297

Provisions of resolution 71/297	*Paragraphs of A/72/751 and A/72/751/Corr.1*
Welcomes the determination of the Secretary-General to fully implement the United Nations policy of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse, and requests the Secretary-General to report on the results achieved and challenges encountered in his next report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (para. 5)	Paragraphs 5 to 60 of the report provide information broadly on the implementation of the zero-tolerance policy, including the results achieved and challenges encountered. Paragraphs 16 to 24 refer specifically to the policy, as well as various areas of focus
Notes that proposals of the Secretary-General on promoting protection from sexual exploitation and abuse require further consultations with Member States, in particular with troop- and police-contributing countries, in order to accommodate their views and concerns, and requests the Secretary-General to hold such consultations and to report on the outcomes at the second part of the resumed seventy-second session of the General Assembly (para. 7)	There were no specific proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General that required consultation with or action by Member States. However, in accordance with the Secretary-General's strategy, regular consultations and engagement with Member States, both formal and informal, took place throughout the year, namely in developing the voluntary compact and engaging with the Member States that are part of the circle of leadership (see paras. 52–53)
Requests the Secretary-General, in his next report, to outline specific measures for increasing cooperation within the United Nations system, including between the Secretariat and its separately administered funds and programmes, to address identified gaps in screening and investigative capacity and in the case management and reporting of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (para. 10)	Paragraphs 6 to 15 of the report provide an overview of the system-wide response to sexual exploitation and abuse. These highlight areas of cooperation within the United Nations system Paragraphs 16 to 24 highlight areas of cooperation across the system in the implementation of the zero-tolerance policy, including risk mitigation measures (paras. 20–21); screening (paras. 22–23); and training (para. 24) Paragraphs 26 to 60 of the report highlight areas of cooperation in the implementation of the Secretary-General's strategy, including the Trust Fund (para. 31); victims' assistance across the system (paras. 32–35); ending impunity and improving reporting and data collection (paras. 36-41); strengthened investigations (paras. 42–45); and partnership and capacity-building (para. 51)
Requests the Secretary-General to include in his next report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse a holistic analysis of United Nations inter-agency cooperation at the country level for the provision of assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, including identified gaps, lessons learned, the responsibilities of the respective agencies and recommendations, as appropriate (para. 12)	Paragraphs 25 to 35 provide an overview of system-wide action and inter-agency cooperation on victims' support and assistance (including through the work of the Victims' Rights Advocate and the Field Victims' Rights Advocates), highlighting areas of responsibility and recommendations Paragraph 28 refers to the Secretary-General's request to the Victims' Rights Advocate to undertake a comprehensive mapping of victims' rights approaches and services available system-wide to build on the work

	already undertaken in this area and provide a clear overview of gaps, overlap, lessons learned and best practices. It is envisaged that this holistic analysis will facilitate the development of recommendations to strengthen inter-agency cooperation on victims' assistance at the country level
Welcomes the determination of the Secretary-General to strengthen investigative capacity in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, of the Secretariat and its separately administered funds and programmes system-wide, in consultation with relevant offices, and looks forward to receiving information in the next report (para. 14)	Paras. 42–45
Commends the intention of the Secretary-General to instruct senior leadership to develop and submit an annual plan of action to combat sexual exploitation and abuse, with specific actions and timelines, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly thereon in the context of his next report (para. 15)	Paras. 11–12
Recalls paragraph 80 of its resolution 70/286 of 17 June 2016, notes that the report of the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse did not contain recommendations on mitigating risk factors linked to recent allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, and requests the Secretary-General to include in his next report recommendations on comprehensively mitigating those risk factors (para. 23)	Paragraphs 19 to 21 specifically refer to risk mitigation measures